

**Assembly Concurrent Resolution**

**No. 87**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Ridley-Thomas**  
**(Coauthors: Assembly Members Brown, Burke, Cooper, Gipson,**  
**Holden, Jones-Sawyer, McCarty, Thurmond, and Weber)**  
**(Coauthors: Senators Hall and Mitchell)**

June 11, 2015

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 87—Relative to the 150th anniversary of Juneteenth.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

ACR 87, as introduced, Ridley-Thomas. The 150th anniversary of Juneteenth.

This measure would recognize June 19, 2015, as the 150th anniversary of Juneteenth and would urge the people of California to join in celebrating Juneteenth as a day to honor and reflect on the significant role that African Americans have played in the history of the United States and how they have enriched society through their steadfast commitment to promoting unity and equality.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, June 19, 2015, marks the 150th anniversary of  
2 Juneteenth; and  
3 WHEREAS, Juneteenth, also known as “Juneteenth  
4 Independence Day,” “Emancipation Day,” “Emancipation  
5 Celebration,” and “Freedom Day,” is the oldest African American  
6 holiday observance in the United States; and  
7 WHEREAS, Juneteenth commemorates the strong survival  
8 instinct of African Americans who were first brought to this

1 country stacked in the bottom of slave ships in a month-long  
2 journey across the Atlantic Ocean known as the “Middle Passage”;  
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Events in the history of the United States that led  
5 to the start of the Civil War in 1861 centered on sectional  
6 differences between the North and the South that were based on  
7 the economic and social divergence caused by the existence of  
8 slavery; and

9 WHEREAS, In 1862, the first clear signs that the end of slavery  
10 was imminent appeared when laws abolishing slavery were adopted  
11 in the territories of Oklahoma, Nebraska, Colorado, and New  
12 Mexico; and

13 WHEREAS, In September 1862, President Lincoln issued the  
14 celebrated Emancipation Proclamation, warning the rebellious  
15 Confederate states that he would declare their slaves “forever free”  
16 if those states did not return to the Union by January 1, 1863; and

17 WHEREAS, Enforcement of the Emancipation Proclamation  
18 occurred only in Confederate states that were under Union Army  
19 control; and

20 WHEREAS, On January 31, 1865, Congress passed the  
21 Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution,  
22 abolishing slavery throughout the United States and its territories;  
23 and

24 WHEREAS, Spontaneous celebration erupted throughout the  
25 country when African Americans learned of their freedom; and

26 WHEREAS, Juneteenth, or June 19, 1865, is considered the  
27 date when the last slaves in America were freed when General  
28 Gordon Granger rode into Galveston, Texas, and issued General  
29 Order No. 3, almost two and one-half years after President Lincoln  
30 issued the Emancipation Proclamation; and

31 WHEREAS, Observance of Juneteenth, a reminder of  
32 emancipation, spread from Texas to the neighboring states of  
33 Louisiana, Arkansas, and Oklahoma, as well as Alabama, Florida,  
34 and California, where many African American Texans migrated;  
35 and

36 WHEREAS, Juneteenth symbolizes freedom, celebrates the  
37 abolishment of slavery, and reminds all Americans of the  
38 significant contributions of African Americans to our society; and

39 WHEREAS, A growing number of American and African  
40 American cultural institutions have sponsored Juneteenth cultural

1 events designed to make all Americans aware of this celebration;  
2 and

3 WHEREAS, Juneteenth celebrations are a tribute to those  
4 African Americans who fought so long and worked so hard to  
5 make the dream of equality a reality; now, therefore, be it

6 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*  
7 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature of the State of California  
8 hereby recognizes June 19, 2015, as the 150th anniversary of  
9 Juneteenth; and be it further

10 *Resolved*, That the Legislature urges the people of California to  
11 join in celebrating Juneteenth as a day to honor and reflect on the  
12 significant role that African Americans have played in the history  
13 of the United States and how they have enriched society through  
14 their steadfast commitment to promoting unity and equality; and  
15 be it further

16 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies  
17 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.